

## THE LITTLE FOLKS.

### How Persimmons Took Care of Baby.

Persimmons was a colored lad  
Way down in Louisiana,  
And all the teaching that he had  
Was given him by his granny.  
But he did his duty ever  
As well as you, it may be;  
With faithfulness and pride always,  
He minded his baby.  
He loved the counsels of the saints,  
And, sometimes, those of sinners,  
To run off "possum-bunting" and  
Steal "water-melon" dinners.  
And fervently at meetin', too,  
On every Sunday night,  
He'd with the elders shout and pray  
By the pine-knots' flaring light,  
And sing their roudest melodies,  
With voice so full and strong,  
You could almost think he learned them  
From the angels' triumph song.

SONG.

We be nearer to de Lord  
Dan de white folks—and dey knows it;  
See de glory-gate unbarred—  
Walk in, darkies, past de guard—  
Bet your dollar He won't close it.

Walk in, darkies, troo de gate,  
Hear de kullered angels holler;  
Go 'way, white folks, you're too late,  
We's de winnin' kuller. Wait  
Till de trumpet-blow to foller."

He would crouch this over softly  
As he lay out in the sun;  
But the song he heard most often—  
His granny's favorite one—  
"Was, 'Jawge Washington,

Thomas Jefferson,  
Persimmons, Henry Clay, be  
Quick shut de do,  
Get up off dat do,  
Come back and mind de baby."

One night there came a fearful storm,  
Almost a second flood;  
The river rose, a torrent swollen  
Of beaten, yellow mud.

It hit at its embankments,  
And lapped them down in foam,  
Till, surging through a wide crevasse,  
The waves seethed round their home.

They scaled the high verandah,  
Till floating chairs and tables  
Clashed against the chandelier.  
It was then Persimmons' granny,  
Scout of arm and terror-proof,  
By means of ax and lever,

Pried up the verandah roof;  
Bound mattresses upon it  
With stoutest cords of rope,  
Lifted out her fainting mistress,  
Saying, "Honey, dar is hope!"

Then, Jawge Washington,  
Thomas Jefferson,  
Persimmons, Henry Clay, be  
Quick on dat raft,  
Don't star' like a calf,  
But take good care ob baby!"

The frothing river lifted them  
Out on its turbid tide,  
And for awhile they floated on  
Together, side by side;  
Till broken by the current strong,  
The frail raft split in two,  
And Persimmons saw his granny  
Fast fading from his view.

The deck-hands on a steamboat  
Heard, as they passed in haste,  
A child's voice singing in the dark,  
Upon the water's waste,  
A song of faith and triumph,  
Of Moses and the Lord;  
And throwing out a coil of rope,  
They drew him safe on board.

Full many a stranger city  
Persimmons wandered through,  
A-lookin' ob der baby," and  
Singing songs he knew,  
At length some City Fathers  
Objected to his plan,  
Arresting as a vagrant  
Our valiant little man.

They carried out their purposes,  
Persimmons "lowed he'd spite 'em,"  
So, slipping from the station-house,  
He stole baby from the asylum,  
And on that very afternoon,  
As it was growing dark,  
He sang, beside the fountain in  
The crowded city park,

A rude camp-meeting anthem,  
Which he had sung before,  
While on his granny's fragile raft  
He drifted from the shore:

SONG.

"Moses smote de water, and  
De sea gabe away;  
De children dey passed ober, for  
De sea gabe away.

O Lord! I feel so glad,  
It am always dark fo' day  
So, honey, don't yer be sad,  
De sea'll gib away."

A lady, dressed in mourning,  
Turned with a sudden start,  
Gave one glance at the baby,  
Then caught it to her heart;  
While a substantial shadow,  
That was walking by her side,  
Seized Persimmons by the shoulder,  
And, while she shook him, cried:

"You, Jawge Washington,  
Thomas Jefferson,  
Persimmons, Henry Clay, be  
Quick, explain yerself, chile—  
Step dat ar fool smile—  
Whur you done been wid baby?"

—St. Nicholas.

All About Blind Man's Buff.

All of our young readers like to  
play blind man's buff, when they  
can; and so do many of the older  
readers, for that matter. But everyone  
may not know that the game is more  
than eight hundred years old, and that  
it was a favorite amusement of gay  
courts and merry-making princes and  
princesses before it became the holiday  
pastime of boys and girls. Blind man's  
buff is one of the sports that came over  
to England in the train of William the  
Conqueror.

It had its origin in Liege, one of the  
fair provinces of France, in the pros-  
perous days of Robert the Devout, who  
succeeded the famous old French mon-  
arch, Hugues Capet, in the year 996.

In the year 999, Liege received,  
among her valiant chiefs, one Jean  
Colin. He was almost a giant in

strength, a Samson among the Liegeois,  
and nearly shared the experience of  
Samson of old, as you shall presently  
hear. This grim warrior used to crush  
his opponents with a mallet. It was  
considered desirable to honor him with  
a title which should follow his name.  
What should it be? Not "head-hit-  
ter," of course; but the poetical desig-  
nation, *Maillard*, or Jean Colin of the  
*Mallet*.

Fends were of perpetual occurrence  
in those dark old times, and Jean  
Colin's mallet was kept constantly busy  
in quelling them. Terrible became the  
name of Jean Colin Maillard.

But Liege had another valiant chief,  
Count de Louvain, who, when Maillard  
had proved himself superior to all of  
his other opponents, continued to bear  
arms against him.

We cannot say whether or not Count  
de Louvain learned his war lessons  
from the conduct of the enemies of  
Samson, but as he was ambitious to  
avoid the tap of Jean Colin's mallet up-  
on his own head, he formed the plan of  
putting out Jean Colin's eyes.

A great battle was fought between  
the two chiefs and their forces. At the  
very first onset Count de Louvain suc-  
ceeded in his purpose of piercing both  
the eyes of Maillard, and he looked up-  
on the field as already won. But the  
latter, with a spirit like that of blind  
Samson, determined that his opponents  
should perish with him, and ordered  
his esquire to take him into the thickest  
of the fight. There he brandished his  
mallet on either hand, and did such  
fearful execution that his enemies fell  
around him in such numbers that victo-  
ry soon declared itself on his side.

"But, Samson-like, though blind, he dealt  
Such blows as never foemen felt;  
To shun them, were in vain.  
This way they fled, and that they run;  
But, of an hundred men, not one  
Ere saw the light again."

Robert the Devout, of France, whose  
troubles with his wives you may have  
read in history, was very fond of deeds  
of valor, and that of Jean Colin Mail-  
lard kindled his admiration. He lav-  
ished honors on the victorious blind  
man, and ordered the stage-players to  
bring out a pantomime of his contest  
with Count de Louvain for the pleasure  
of the court. The court was delighted  
with the play, for the terrible mallet of  
Maillard, and the warriors dropping  
down here and there, almost without  
knowing what had hit them, was all  
very exciting; and people in that rude  
age liked what was sensational even  
more than they do now. The children  
began to act a similar play in the  
streets, one of the players, more strong  
and active than the rest, being blind-  
folded and given a stick; and thus  
blind man's buff soon became the popu-  
lar diversion in France and Normandy,  
where it was known under the name of  
*Colin Maillard*. This name it still  
bears in France and on the continent of  
Europe.

"The king repeated oft the play:  
The children followed, day by day,  
In merriment, as rough.  
And to this time do sportive feet  
Young Robert's pantomime repeat—  
The play of Blind Man's Buff."  
—St. Nicholas for May.

How We Are United.

Little Daughter—"I wish the rivers  
would rise."

Father—"Why, what have you to do  
with the river's rising?"

Little Daughter—"A great deal,  
father, for then the boats will run."

Father—"And what have you to do  
with the boats' running, my child?"

Little Daughter—"They would bring  
the cotton down, father."

Father (looking over his spectacles)—  
"And what have you to do, darling,  
with cotton bales?"

Little Daughter—"Why, if the cot-  
ton was down you will be able to sell it,  
you know, dear father," smilingly.

Father—"And what then?"

Little Daughter—"You would have  
plenty of money."

Father—"Well?"

Little Daughter (laying her hand on  
his shoulder and looking up in his  
face)—"Then you could pay mother  
that \$20 gold piece you borrowed from  
her, you know, father."

Father—"What then, child?"

Little Daughter—"Then mother  
could pay Aunt Sarah the \$10 she owes  
her."

Father—"Aye, indeed; and what  
then?"

Little Daughter—"And Aunt Sarah  
would pay Sister Jane the \$1 she prom-  
ised to give her New Year's, but didn't,  
because she didn't have any cotton—  
any money, I mean, father."

Father—"Well, and what else?"

(He lays down the newspaper and  
looks at her cautiously, with a half  
smile.)

Little Daughter—"Sister Jane would  
pay Brother John his fifty cents back,  
and he said when he got it he would

give me the half dime he owes me, and  
two dimes to buy marbles; and that  
is what I want the river to rise for  
and the big boats to run! And I owe nurse  
the other dime, and I must pay my  
debts!"

Pa looked at ma. "There it is," he  
said. "We are all, big and little, like  
a row of bricks. Touch one, and  
away we all go, even down to our little  
Carrie here. She has, as a child, as  
great an interest in the rise of the river  
as I have. We are all, old and young,  
waiting for money to buy marbles."

A good lesson for debtor and cred-  
itor, too, and well enforced.—*New Or-  
leans Christian Advocate*.

### The Willful Lie.

When Henry B. was about 12 years  
old he worked a few weeks in a cotton  
factory. Every morning, after bidding  
mother, little sister, and brother, as  
well as his favorite "Chip," "good-  
by," he would trudge, with dinner-pail  
in hand, to his work.

Chip was a little dog which a gentle-  
man had given Henry; and he was a  
sprightly little creature, very fond of  
his young master, who loved him in re-  
turn. Indeed, it seemed hard for them  
to be separated for a day.

In the room with Henry worked a  
young man called Fred, who was 18  
years old, and who appeared to like  
Henry. One day, when Fred had been  
out riding, he went to Henry on his re-  
turn and told him that, as he was pass-  
ing his mother's house, Chip ran out,  
barking at his horse, and, running  
under the carriage, the wheels went  
over him and killed him. "I am  
sorry," said Fred, "but could not  
help it."

How badly Harry felt! His favorite  
Chip dead! Being a truthful boy him-  
self, he never doubted Fred's story.

When he sat down to eat his dinner  
the thought of his poor Chip almost  
choked him; it seemed that he could  
not swallow a mouthful. How long the  
afternoon was! and how he dreaded  
going home! No little dog to greet  
him as usual.

Boys, refrain from lying. It is mean,  
cowardly, and an awful sin in the sight  
of God, to lie.

Chip lived to comfort his little  
master, who is now a respectable young  
man, and a comfort to his parents and  
friends.—*Young Pilgrim*.

### A Clean Apron.

A lady wanted a trusty little maid to  
come and help her take care of a baby.  
Nobody could recommend one, and she  
hardly knew where to look for the right  
kind of girl. One day she was passing  
through a by-lane, and saw a little girl,  
with a clean apron, holding a baby in  
the doorway of a small house. "That  
is the maid for me," said the lady. She  
stopped and asked for her mother.  
"Mother has gone out to work," an-  
swered the girl; "father is dead, and  
now mother has to do everything."  
"Should you not like to come and live  
with me?" asked the lady. "I should  
like to help mother somehow," said the  
little maid. The lady, more pleased  
than ever with the tidy looks of the  
girl, went to see her mother after she  
came home; and the end of it was, the  
lady took the maid to live with her, and  
she found—what indeed she expected  
to find—that the neat appearance of  
her person showed the neat and orderly  
bent of her mind. She had no careless  
habits; she was no friend to dirt; but  
everything she had to do with was  
folded up and put away and kept care-  
fully. The lady finds great comfort in  
her, and helps her mother, whose lot is  
not now so hard as it was. She smiles  
when she says "Sally's recommenda-  
tion was her clean apron;" and who  
will say it was not a good one?—*New  
York Observer*.

### Kites.

It is a great art to make a good kite.  
It should be shaped evenly so as to bal-  
ance well. The sticks should be just  
strong enough for the size of the kite,  
without being too heavy. The paper  
should be of proper strength and light-  
ness. The four cords that start from  
the four corners should be gathered  
into one and attached at just the right  
point to the holding cord so as to insure  
its proper angle against the wind.  
And, above all (or rather, below all),  
the tail should be long enough and  
heavy enough to balance the teetery  
object in the air, and make it sail like  
a thing of life. A tail too heavy or too  
light for its length, or too short for its  
weight, whichever you please, is sure  
to make trouble in kite-flying. Now,  
boys, whenever your kite flops and "don't  
go," you may be sure that she is wrong  
in one or more of the above-mentioned  
points.

ONE-FOURTH of the members of Con-  
gress have signed the total abstinence  
pledge.

### A WORKING EMPEROR.

According to all accounts, Emperor  
Francis Joseph, of Austria, is one of the  
hardest working men in the world. He  
rises at six, sips a cup of coffee, and  
then walks in the garden while his sec-  
retary gives him an account of the let-  
ters received the day before. After that  
he goes to his library, where he receives  
petitions and applications, and gives de-  
cisions to them. This requires a knowl-  
edge of the seven languages spoken in  
the empire, all of which are spoken flu-  
ently by the Emperor. Often two hun-  
dred papers have to be examined in the  
morning. At 9 he receives his minis-  
ters, with whom he holds a cabinet  
meeting. At 11 he takes a lunch and  
then goes into the reception hall,  
where he welcomes all who wish to see  
him. Here he is a patriarch and not an  
Emperor. He comes forward to greet  
the aged, poor, and infirm, and motions  
to those high in position to wait. At 1,  
he visits his children, and sometimes  
goes out to ride with them. At 2 he  
meets his Foreign Ambassadors. At 3  
he partakes of coffee and cakes, and  
then hears an account of the doings of  
the Legislative Assembly. At 5 he  
takes his dinner, after which he sends  
dispatches to his Governors and friends.  
He is a good telegraph operator, and  
delights to use an instrument. At 8 he  
goes with the Empress to the opera,  
where he ordinarily remains but half an  
hour. From then till bedtime he reads  
by himself. Almost his only amuse-  
ment is hunting in the mountains, to  
which he goes every two months. It  
will be seen by the above that to be an  
Emperor, and to follow the business  
well, requires hard work.

### CURIOUS CALCULATIONS.

Let no boy be disheartened by the  
following calculation, but remember  
that untiring industry will enable  
him to come out victor in the end. Say  
that the boy is ten years old and is tak-  
en up into a high mountain, or a respect-  
able hill, perhaps, will do as well, and  
shown the various articles he will have  
to consume should he live an average  
life-time. Surrounded with these ob-  
jects, he sees first 30 oxen, then 200  
sheep, 100 calves, 200 lambs, 50 pigs,  
1,200 chickens, 300 turkeys, 263  
pigeons, 140 pounds salmon, 120 pounds  
of other fish, 30,000 oysters, 5,443  
vegetables, 243 pounds butter, 24,000  
eggs, 44 tons bread, 3,000 gallons tea  
and coffee, besides tons of fruit, bar-  
rels of sweetmeats, and hogsheds of  
wine. These are the figures given by  
Mr. Soyer, the cook of the London Re-  
form Club, in his book, "The Modern  
Housewife," as the amount consumed  
by each individual in a life-time, and  
they are said to be below, rather than  
above, the real quantity. Of course the  
food may be varied, but what is taken  
off from one kind must be added to  
some other. The boy may seriously  
apprehend that his jaws and stomach  
will give out before he has disposed of  
this vast quantity of food; but he will  
take courage when he casts his eye  
over the sleek form of one in middle  
life who has well-nigh accomplished his  
task without showing the least sign of  
weariness. Many a man has disposed  
of his allotment, and is apparently  
ready for another job of equal mag-  
nitude; and thus will it be with the race  
until the end of time.

WHEN the dwelling of Bliss Goddard,  
of Londonderry, N. H., was on fire the  
other night, he rushed out of the house  
with an old teakettle, and asked a friend  
to hold it for him while he saved some  
other furniture. Then he went and  
worked valiantly, while the friend, tired  
of holding an old kettle, threw it at the  
blazing house and went his way. When  
the house was in ashes, Mr. Goddard  
looked after his friend, and found the  
old kettle amid the smoldering ruins.  
The \$8,000 in United States bonds,  
which made the old kettle which held  
more valuable in the eyes of Mr. God-  
dard than it had seemed to his friend,  
were found to be in a bad condition; it  
is thought, however, that part of them  
can be identified by experts, and God-  
dard has gone to Washington with  
his kettle to see what can be done  
about it.

THE New York Cremation Society  
has tried its 'prentice-hand already.  
One of its members was polite enough  
to die within a day or two after he  
joined the fire-worshippers. His body  
was put upright in a fire-proof recepta-  
cle, through which intensely-heated air  
was forced. His father paid the bill—  
\$3.25—and now has the ashes of his son  
in a neat little urn on the parlor man-  
tle-piece.

"UNCLE JAMES, won't you perform  
some of those juggling tricks for us to-  
night that you learned in China?"  
"No, my dear, I'm not in the vein."  
"What vein, uncle?" "Why, the  
juggler vein, of course."

### BE GOOD TO YOURSELF.

"Good-bye!" the driver said,  
And the coach went off in a whirl!  
And the coachman bowed his handsome head;  
"Be good to yourself, my girl!"  
And many a fond good-bye have I heard,  
From many an aching heart;  
And many a friendly farewell word,  
When strangers came to part.  
And I've heard a thousand merry quips,  
And many a senseless joke;  
And many a fervent prayer from lips  
That, all a-trembling, spoke:  
And many a bit of good advice,  
In smooth, proverbial phrase;  
And many a wish—a little price—  
For health and happy days;  
But musing how the human soul,  
What e'er the fates may will,  
Still measures by its self-control,  
Its greatest good or ill;  
Of benedictions, I protest,  
'Mid many a shining pearl,  
I like the merry coachman's best—  
"Be good to yourself, my girl!"

### VARIETIES.

THE press and the pulpit may say  
what they please, but a man in dove-  
colored pants and patent-leather boots  
is not a fit person to adjust a tub to  
catch rainwater.

A POMPOUS philosopher extracted the  
following reply from an advanced free  
school lad to the query:

"How is the earth divided, my lad?"  
"By earthquakes, sir."

GEN. WASHINGTON'S family Bible is  
advertised for sale. It is in three large  
quarto volumes, and the public are  
gravely informed that it was presented  
to Gen. Washington by the author.

A DABBY, left in charge of a telegraph  
office while the operator went to dinner,  
hear some one "call" over the wires,  
and began shouting at the instrument,  
"De operator isn't yer!" The noise  
ceased.

"MOTHER, you mustn't whip me for  
running away from school any more."  
"Why not?" "Cos my schoolbook  
says that ants are the most indus-  
trious things in the world, and ain't I  
a tru-ant?"

AN unfortunate man in Indianapolis,  
who lost several toes by a car-wheel,  
was consoled by an Irishman near by  
with, "Whist, there! you're making  
more noise than many a man I've seen  
with his head off."

HUSBAND—"Why don't you wear hair  
and things, and dresses, and look like  
other women?" Wife—"What! and  
have everybody say, 'What a pity that  
handsome woman married to that ugly  
little man!' Oh, no!"

A WOMAN who had recently had her  
butter seized at the market for short  
weight, gave as a reason that the cow  
from which the butter was made was  
subject to a cramp, and that caused the  
butter to shrink in weight.

"FELLOW-TRAVELERS," said a colored  
preacher, "ef I had been eatin' dried  
apples for a week, an' den took to drink-  
in' for a monf, I couldn't feel more  
swelled up dan I am dis minit wid pride  
an' vanity at seein' such full 'tendence  
har."

A SAILOR, in describing a voyage to  
some landmen, remarked that his ship  
stood on one tack all day and part of  
the night, whereupon one of his aud-  
itors declared: "I don't believe it. I  
had one tack in one of my new boots  
yesterday, and I couldn't stand on it five  
minutes."

AUNT HEZIRA looked up from her  
paper and exclaimed, "My gracious  
me, if moonlight hain't become danger-  
ous out in Michigan!" "How so,  
aunt?" asked her nephew. "Why, it  
says here that two men were robbed  
lately, near Detroit, by moonlight."

An old lady, on hearing that a young  
friend had lost his place on account of a  
misdemeanor, exclaimed: "Miss De-  
meanor! Lost his place on account  
of Miss Demeanor! Well, well, I'm  
afraid it's too true that there's alius a  
woman at the bottom of a man's difficul-  
ties."

### LOVE'S RESPONSE.

I pressed her gentle form to me,  
And whispered in her ear,  
If, when I was far away,  
She'd drop for me a tear.  
I paused for some cheering words  
My throbbing heart to cool,  
And with her rosy lips she said,  
Oh, lie, you're such a fool!"

LETTERS which go wandering all over  
the country for an owner are not often  
sent astray by the stupidity of the post  
officials than by the carelessness of the  
correspondents. The March record of  
the dead-letter office at Washington  
shows the reception of 354,967 dead  
letters, of which 218,994 were not de-  
livered from improper address or other  
error; 40,467 letters were held for post-  
age; 20,466 were hotel and fictitious  
letters, while 21,231 were returned to  
the writers during the month, 2,717  
contained money, 1,939 valuables, and  
1,347 property of various kinds.